

NEWS Utah Labor Commission

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Utah Anti-discrimination and Labor Division receives national commendation

SALT LAKE CITY, June 20, 2007 – The Utah Anti-discrimination and Labor Division (UALD) of the Utah Labor Commission has been awarded the Annual Public Service Commendation by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for its “outstanding achievement in the enforcement of civil rights laws” in partnership with the EEOC’s Phoenix District Office.

UALD received the award primarily for its investigation last year involving Sweet Candy Company’s use of an English-Language proficiency examination given to a select number of employees. UALD and the EEOC determined the examination unfairly excluded Latino and Asian workers based on their National Origin. Sweet Candy was very cooperative and as a result of the joint investigation, agreed to cease using the exam. The company also agreed to provide monetary compensation to two employees who filed charges of discrimination and to other employees who lost their jobs as a result of failing the discriminatory examination. Sweet Candy further agreed to create at least a \$27,000 scholarship fund to assist non-English proficient students.

Sherrie Hayashi, Utah Labor Commissioner, said “This national commendation by the EEOC represents an achievement of which we are very proud. The case involving Sweet Candy demonstrates the high level of cooperation between the State of Utah, the EEOC, and the private sector to promote equal opportunity in the workplace. Workplace discrimination in Utah should never be tolerated and UALD will continue to vigorously enforce our anti-discrimination laws. Sweet Candy should also be commended for its commitment to creating a level playing field for its employees and applicants, and for making Sweet Candy an even better place to be employed.”

The UALD was only one of three Fair Employment Practices Agencies (FEPA’s) in the country to receive the award. There are 97 FEPA’s nationwide.

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